

## BOOK REVIEW

PETER WYSE JACKSON. 2014. **Ireland's Generous Nature: The Past and Present Uses of Wild Plants in Ireland.** (ISBN-13: 978-0915279784, hbk). Missouri Botanical Garden Press, P.O. Box 299, St. Louis, Missouri 63166-0299, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.mbgpress.org). \$60.00 (leather bound \$75.00), 768 pp., color photos and illustrations, 8.25" × 10.25".

This comprehensive study of the ethnobotany of Ireland provides an in-depth, interesting, and enjoyable discussion of the historic and current uses, as well as the cultural significance, of native and introduced plants that are found throughout the Irish countryside.

At 750 pages, this volume contains information on more than 1000 species of plants, of which more than 600 have known ethnobotanical uses. The first 150 pages of the book provide the reader with historical and cultural context as well as general information related to the plants. The remainder of the book is devoted to an alphabetical listing, narrative descriptions, and common uses of flowering plants, grasses and sedges, trees and shrubs, ferns and fern allies, algae, and miscellaneous plants.

The narrative on each species includes facts, lore, legend, and traditions associated with that plant. There are 17 categories of ethnobotanical uses, all represented by icons. The icons are displayed along with the narrative descriptions for quick reference. Many of the descriptions are also accompanied by a small color photo of the plant. Ethnobotanical uses such as plants used for food, beverages, medicines, potions, cosmetics, textiles, construction materials, arts and crafts, dyes, poisons, cultural and religious symbols, currency, and many other uses are noted as appropriate for each species.

The first appendix is a listing of plant names that are part of local Irish place names. Appendix II is a listing of plants with the scientific plant name, the Irish common name, and the Gaelic name (with pronunciation guides!) for each plant. These listings are followed by a section which describes the exhibitions and traditional folklife locales where plants and their varied uses can be seen and studied. Finally, there is a glossary which is useful in understanding the botanical and taxonomic terminology that is commonly used in Ireland.

This unique book would be enjoyable and useful to botanists as well as casual readers who have a special interest in ethnobotany, the natural resources of Ireland, or the social and cultural history of Ireland.—*Dan Caudle, Independent Grassland Consultant, Weatherford, Texas, U.S.A.*